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FREE THOUGHTS,

AND

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FREE THOUGHTS,

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BOLD TRUTHS:

Or, a Politico-Tritical

ESSAY

UPON THE

Preſent Situation of Affairs.

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AT this time, when I fear that it may with too much Truth be ſaid,

Terras Aſtræa reliquit;

and that the mean and diſhonourable Motives of private Intereſt

and Ambition, or of Diſappointment and Reſentment, warp the Judgment, and byaſs the Conduct, of all my Fellow Subjects of a certain Rank, and who are within their Vortex; I feel with ſingular and infinite Satisfaction to myſelf, that I have intirely eſcaped that epidemical Infection. I never had any Employment, I never will have any; as I never aſked, I was never refuſed; as I never expected, I was never diſappointed. I can therefore have no private View, no Reſentment, no Rancour. All my Words, Thoughts, and Actions ſhall, without the leaſt Regard to Perſons, but with the ſtricteſt Regard to things, be directed as

thoſe

thoſe of every good Citizen ought to be, by a more generous Motive, and to an honeſter Object, the Honour and Intereſt of my dear native Country. But as Egotiſm was never the favourite Figure of my Rhetoric, I ſhall ſay no more of myſelf: let the Truths contained in the following ſhort Eſſay, ſpeak for me.

We have now a freſh repreſentative Body, of the whole Body of the People of *Great Britain*: and the Fate of this Country muſt in a great meaſure, I might ſay wholly, depend upon their Conduct. Shall they be either bullied or bribed to act with a ſlaviſh Submiſſion to the Dictates

of a Power-engroſſing Miniſter? Shall they dwindle or ſhrink into a Parliament of *Paris*, and meet only to regiſter the Edicts of the Crown? God forbid. On the other hand, ſhall Humour, Error, a Spirit of Contradiction and Obſtinacy, hurry them into the Confuſion and Turbulency of a *Poliſh* Diet, where the Malignity of Oppoſition, or the Pride of a *Veto*, ſo frequently prevail over, and totally ſubvert the Public Good? God forbid too. I hope they will ſteer equally clear of both *Scylla* and *Charybdis*, and not ſplit upon the one, by endeavouring to avoid the other. I ſhall now with Freedom, and with as little perſonal Offence as the Nature of

my Subject will admit of, point out the Means.

Men are by Nature ſuch ſocial Animals, that when aſſembled in conſiderable numbers, they have been, and not unjuſtly, compared to droves or flocks of other Animals; ſometimes Sheep, ſometimes Wolves, ſometimes Geeſe, &c. who are obſerved to follow three or four of their Leaders, wherever they pleaſe to carry them. This is in truth, (let us ſpeak out, for it is time) the Caſe of our own two-footed, unfledged, rational, and riſible Species, Man. A large Number collected together, are always led by, and follow a ſmall one, from Inſtinct,

Inſtinct, Habit, Perſuaſion, Connection, or ſome other Motive.

In the preſent repreſentative Body of the Nation, it muſt be owned that there are many Gentlemen of eminent Abilities; who have both Heads to contrive, and Tongues to perſuade, and who conſequently would be followed by the Multitude. All theſe Gentlemen are ſo well known that it ſeems unneceſſary to name them, which however for greater Preciſion I will do. Mr. *K***, Mr. *G****, Mr. *J****, Mr. *W****, Mr. *X****, and Mr. *H****. Now if theſe Gentlemen will (which I think can hardly be doubted) lay aſide all little perſonal diſlikes which

perhaps

perhaps ſome of them may have for others, all Jealouſies, all private Views of Intereſt or Power, and heartily unite, in promoting thoſe Meaſures which equally tend to the Safety, Honour, and Glory of his Majeſty, and his Royal Family, and the Advantage of the Nation in general; this, I will be bold to affirm, would be the moſt glorious Period in the Annals of this Country.

I am well aware that this Scheme will by ſome be thought more viſionary than practicable, and the Succeſs of it more to be wiſhed than hoped for; and I may probably be aſked, which of theſe Gentlemen muſt have the particular

cular Lead, for that ſome one neceſſarily muſt. To this I anſwer, firſt in the Words of Sir *Sampſon Legend* in the Play, to his Son *Valentine*, 'What's matter who has it *Val*, thou ſhalſt have it, I'll have it, any body ſhall have it, or no body ſhall have it all.' But in the next place, I beg leave to aſſert, that the Lead of that Houſe is conſtitutionally and wiſely placed in the Hands of a very worthy Gentleman Sir *H*** B**n*, † who with a black Stick in his Hand (N. B. not a white one) walks into the Houſe, and in a magiſterial Manner commands them to follow him out of it,

† Gentleman Uſher of the Black Rod.

it, while he leads them to the Bar of another.

Again. That such an edifying Unanimity and Harmony, is by no means impracticable, appears from the Example of a very numerous, learned, and respectable Body, not generally thought to be composed of the meekest Individuals, where during these last thirty Years there has not been the least Debate, the least Discrepancy of Opinions, but on the contrary an Unanimity, almost miraculous, considering the Nature of Man. I mean the *Convocation*.

I am very sorry that the Course of my Argument obliges me to make

make uſe of thoſe odious Party Names of Whig and Tory; but as I am aſſured that they are now become mere Names, *Vox et præterea nihil*, and that thoſe who were formerly diſtinguiſhed by ſuch Appellations, now mean exactly the ſame thing; it cannot therefore be doubted but that they will ſhake Hands, be good Friends, and act in concert; ſince there can be nothing more puerile or frivolous, than for thoſe to diſagree, who do not differ. And it is to be hoped that the ſly Inſinuations of Lord *M****, or the open Endeavours of Mr. *A**** to prevent this wiſhed for Union, will have no Effect.

The

The State of Jacobitiſm deſerves more ſerious Attention, though I will not preſume peremptorily to decide the grand Queſtion, whether there are now any Jacobites in *England*, or not?

That there are very few, or none in *Scotland*, is of public Notoriety. That there are many in *Ireland*, is too juſtly to be feared, becauſe there are many Papiſts; and that the Principles and Doctrines of Jacobitiſm, ſuch as indefeazable, unalienable, hereditary Divine Right, paſſive Obedience, and abſolute Power, have a wonderful Analogy to, and are very proper Concomitants of, the not

more

more miraculous, and incomprehenſible Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation. For, as the Poet juſtly obſerves,

Qui Bavium non odit, amat tua carmina Mevi.

But as perhaps the Attention of my Readers may by this time be a little tired, I will give them a very humorous Digreſſion, not only for their Entertainment but for their Improvement.

A learned Diſſertation upon Ducklings and Goſlings.

A very curious Naturaliſt has lately obſerved, that Ducklings hatched under and adopted by a Hen, are ſtrangely puzzled and perplexed,

perplexed, between their filial Piety for their ſuppoſed Mother, and their natural Inſtinct to dabble in the Water. The latter attracts them into it, the Mother clucks them out of it; Inſtinct has it's turn again, and in they go. The Mother clucks again, and out they come, and all this ſo alternatively, that they cannot be ſaid to be either ſtaunch Water, or Land Animals.

Now with Submiſſion to that learned Naturaliſt, I apprehend ſome little Miſtake in this Matter, and that we ſhould read *Goſlings* inſtead of Ducklings. My Conjecture is founded upon the following Paſſage in *Plot*'s Natural Hi-

ſtory of *Oxfordſhire*: " There is, ſays that correct Author, " great " Store of Goſlings upon the " Banks of the *Iſis*. Though wild, " they are both hatched and bred " by Hens of a particular large " black Breed. Theſe Goſlings by " Inſtinct, take delight in the " Water, in which Propenſity they " are, by a ſtrange Inverſion of " all Inſtinct, greatly encouraged " by their black dry Nurſes, in- " ſtead of their endeavouring to " cluck them out of it. Nay " which is ſtill more extraordinary, " if they obſerve in their Nurſe- " lings, the leaſt Shyneſs or Timi- " dity, for croſſing the Water, " they plunge into it themſelves by " way of Example, and aukwardly

" and

" and clumſily ſwim to the other
" Side. Theſe black Fowl are re-
" ſpected as ſacred, and fed and
" pampered like thoſe of the Au-
" gurs among the *Romans*. But
" as they are remarkably voracious
" and thirſty, it is to be preſumed
" that they would not have drawn
" *P. Claudius* in the Punick War,
" into the ſame Difficulties which
" the Augural Fowls then did,
" by obſtinately refuſing either to
" eat or drink. While young
" theſe Birds are apt to wander,
" and many of them have been
" ſeen at *Rome* and *Paris*, but when
" they are arrived to the Age and
" Solidity of grown up Geeſe, they
" become more domeſtick, and

" cackle and batten in Sloth and " Stubble."

To return to our Subject, from which perhaps we have digreſſed too long.

The due Proportion of our Sea and Land-Forces, is another Point of the utmoſt Importance to every true *Briton*, and ought to be calculated relatively to each other. A too large ſtanding Army in Time of Peace, may be dangerous to our Liberties; and a too ſmall one, would be inſufficient for our Defence. The ſame with regard to our Naval Force; too few Ships in Commiſſion, would not ſecure our Poſſeſſions in *America*, nor protect

protect our Trade. And too many would unneceſſarily increaſe the Navy Debt. But after all, our Ships are our Wooden Walls, and let us make them ſo.

Hic Murus Aheneus eſto.

I was therefore greatly ſhocked at that raſh Expreſſion of Mr. *R****, who upon that Occaſion was pleaſed to ſay that——but I will not repeat it to his Prejudice, and really hope that he will be more guarded for the future.

This naturally leads me to the State of our great National Debt, and the Sinking Fund. Great Objects, and worthy of univerſal Conſideration.

ſideration. I confeſs I do not view the National Debt in that gloomy Light in which many worthy Patriots ſeem to ſee it. The Body Politick has been aptly and frequently compared to the Body Natural, and a Nation to a private Man. Now as I have long obſerved that thoſe Individuals who are the moſt in Debt, always ſpend the moſt Money, and live the beſt, I flatter myſelf, and I think not unreaſonably, that that may be the Caſe of my dear Country, for many Ages yet to come.

I have now gone through the Taſk I undertook, and my Conſcience tells me, with Impartiality, and Freedom; if I have expreſſed

too

too much warmth upon certain Points and certain Perſons, the Importance of the Subject will, I hope, excuſe me.

The Swarms of mercenary low Party Scriblers will, I am ſenſible, fall upon me ſeverally, for not having undeſervedly flattered, or undeſervedly blamed any Party. But let them ſnarl and bark as much as they pleaſe, this is all the Reply they ſhall have from me,

Meâ me virtute involvo.

F I N I S.

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